

## Message Text

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UNCLAS STATE 082167

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION GENEVA FROM STATE APR 10

QUOTE UNCLAS STATE 082167

E.O. 11652:NA

TAGS: EAID, PFOR, VS

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE ORPHANS

REF: GENEVA 2469

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE APRIL 10:

HEADLINE: RED CROSS CRITICIZES BABY LIFT

BEGIN TEXT:

-- ADOPTION OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE CHILDREN AND THE PROCESS BY WHICH THEY ARE IDENTIFIED FOR ADOPTION IS NOT BEING DONE ACCORDING TO GENEVA CONVENTION LAWS GOVERNING PROTECTION OF CIVILIANS, A SPOKESMAN FOR THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS SAID YESTERDAY IN GENEVA.

-- ACCORDING TO THE SPOKESMAN, THE CONVENTION PROVIDES THAT EDUCATION OF SUCH CHILDREN SHOULD BE PROVIDED WHERE POSSIBLE BY PERSONS OF THE CULTURAL TRADITION.

-- PARTIES IN THE CONFLICT, HE SAID, ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE

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ALL NECESSARY MEASURES TO ASCERTAIN FAMILY TIES OF CHILDREN

UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE AND CERTIFY THEM FOR ADOPTION.

-- "ALL THESE CONDITIONS DO NOT APPEAR TO BE BEING FULFILLED IN ADOPTIONS AT PRESENT BEING CARRIED OUT IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD, BECAUSE CHILDREN ARE BEING TAKEN AWAY FROM THEIR CULTURAL MILIEU," THE SPOKESMAN SAID.

--CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE CHILDREN ARE LEAVING SAIGON WILL MAKE COMPLETE IDENTIFICATION OF THE CHILDREN DIFFICULT UNLESS RED CROSS OFFICIALS IN WELCOMING COUNTRIES TAKE STEP TO REMEDY THE SITUATION IMMEDIATELY, HE SAID.

-- ACCORDING TO THE SPOKESMAN, THE 1949 CONVENTION PERMITS PROVISION OF TEMPORARY HOMES FOR WAR CHILDREN BUT FORBIDS "FORMAL AND DEFINITIVE ADOPTION SUCH AS IS BEING PRACTICED NOW WHEN EVERYONE WANTS TO IMPORT VIETNAMESE CHILDREN."

-- THE CONVENTION LAYS DOWN CERTAIN "GUARANTEES" FOR RECEIVING AND HOUSING CHILDREN UNDER AGE 15 IN A NEUTRAL COUNTRY WHILE CONFLICT LASTS, HE SAID.

-- THEY STIPULATED IN PARTICULAR THAT CHILDREN WHO HAD BEEN ORPHANED OR SEPARATED FROM THEIR FAMILIES SHOULD NOT BE LEFT ON THEIR OWN, THAT EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE FOR THEIR UPKEEP AND THEIR EDUCATION AND THAT OPPORTUNITY SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR PRACTICE OF THEIR RELIGION.  
END TEXT

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF STATEMENT ON THIS SUBJECT RELEASED BY AMERICAN RED CROSS APRIL 10. BEGIN TEXT:

-- GEORGE M. ELSEY, PRESIDENT OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS, EXPRESSED HIS CONCERN TODAY OVER A STATEMENT ISSUED BY AN INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS SPOKESMAN CRITICIZING EFFORTS ON THE PART OF VARIOUS AGENCIES TO AIRLIFT VIETNAMESE ORPHANS TO THE UNITED STATES AND TO OTHER COUNTRIES.

-- "THE UNNAMED SPOKESMAN IN GENEVA APPARENTLY HAS NOT FAMILIARIZED HIMSELF WITH THE PROCEDURES BEING FOLLOWED BY THE ADOPTION AGENCIES," MR. ELSEY SAID. "TO THE BEST  
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OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, ALL OF THE CHILDREN WHO HAVE REACHED THE UNITED STATES IN RECENT DAYS HAVE COME UNDER PROTECTIVE AGREEMENTS WORKED OUT LONG AGO BETWEEN THESE AGENCIES AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM."

-- "IT IS UNFORTUNATE," MR. ELSEY CONTINUED, "THAT A STATEMENT ISSUED BY A SPOKESMAN FOR A RED CROSS ORGANIZATION IN SWITZERLAND WAS MADE WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF THE

FACTS."

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-- ELSEY CONCLUDED, "THE AMERICAN RED CROSS WILL  
CONTINUE TO ASSIST IN THOSE AREAS CONCERNED WITH HUMANI-  
TARIAN RELIEF WHEREVER THERE IS A NEED." END TEXT.

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